Introduction

Part of the regular fare in American cinema in the 1950s and early 1960s were stories of Americans in Europe. The American, usually young, naïve, and female, arrives in Europe filled with vague but romantic ambitions. She soaks up the beauty and culture of the Old World, tours the grand monuments, and mixes with the colorful locals. Inevitably, she falls in love. She must make a choice between her old life and the romantic allures of the Old World.

The associations between Europe and romance long predate this cycle of films, and stories of American sexual awakening and self-discovery in Europe occasionally still reappear.[1] However, in the period between the end of World War II and the building of the Berlin Wall, at the point in history where American isolationism had ended for good and the United States took a dominant role in the postwar world order, America imagined itself young and in love in Europe.

This moment at which America was forging a new role for itself in the international scene coincided with a set of industrial challenges in Hollywood that made American filmmakers also ready to try their luck abroad. As a result, America's filmic fantasies of Europe were, for the first time, shot (and often processed and finished) on location as part of a trend that came to be known as "runaway filmmaking." New, larger format screens were filled with the storied landscapes of the Old World. The romances doubled as travelogue films. In this way, audiences accompanied the characters and filmmakers on their European tour.

In this book, I will examine Hollywood's European travelogue romances, 1947–1964. Read as an industrial phenomenon, this group of films shows how Hollywood weathered one of the most difficult periods in its history. As a cultural phenomenon, the films provide an insight into America's evolving sense of its place in the wider world of the postwar era.

The book proceeds from the methodological assertion that films both derive their meaning from and contribute to their contextual surrounding. Although the formal construction of the filmic text can reveal how the films produce meaning, a formalist reading provides scant suggestion about how films circulate in an ideological field, a field in which they are obvious contributors. On the other hand, as we will see, a formal component such as the wide-screen process can have tremendous ideological implications as well. Thus, while film form will be an integral part of the discussion, the book remains firmly rooted in understanding films as participating in the cultural conversation of the moment.

In the next few pages, I would like to begin to orient the travelogue romances, which formed a staple during the first decade and a half of Hollywood's runaway filmmaking practices, in their historical context. I will then defend the claim that this set of films constitutes a genre. After that, we will take a brief view of the industrial history that led the studios to Europe, before undertaking readings of individual films and production histories.

Hollywood and the American Century

On February 7, 1941, just ten months before the United States formally entered World War II, Henry Luce, founder of *Time* magazine and noted American conservative, proclaimed the twentieth century to be the "American Century." This claim was predicated on the assumption that sooner or later Americans would enter the war and that once they did, they would necessarily be victorious. Moreover, Luce suggested that the victory would then allow the United States to assume its rightful place as world leader in order to "exert upon the world the full impact of our influence, for such purposes as we see fit and by such means as we see fit."[2] Luce's frightening call to colonialist arms signaled that at least a faction of American conservatism had broken ranks and that the American industrial class now saw not only entry into the war, but a broader commitment to internationalism as in its best interests.

Whether Luce's "American Century" editorial or the attack on Pearl Harbor marks the turning point, the fact is that the United States' entry into World War II connoted a shift in American self-understanding, one that reached from the political elite class to the common foot soldier to the average moviegoer. America and Americans understood themselves as important

players on the global stage. This change in identity was neither immediate nor did it go entirely uncontested. But, the conditions under which the Americans entered the war stipulated that, once it was over, it would be difficult for America to return to its traditional isolationism.

Since 1941, America has settled into its role, in its varying guises, as a global hegemon. While World War II itself provided many opportunities to display the United States' immeasurable human and natural resources, the postwar period allowed for a wider range of activities through which the United States could establish dominance. This new role meant the dedication of greater resources to national priorities and therefore an expansion of the role of the federal government. It meant that the United States would maintain a large standing army that would be deployed in bases throughout Europe and the Pacific Rim.

As companies sought to take advantage of the position America had achieved through the war, commerce became more internationalized, thus causing federal officials to establish policies to encourage expansion of international operations, especially into Allied countries whose support was deemed important to U.S. strategic interests. These interests led the Truman administration to devise means to prevent Western Europe from falling into the expanding Soviet empire. The European Recovery Act, generally known as the Marshall Plan, not only lifted the economies of Western Europe at a time when the region had little access to other capital investment, it also laid the foundations of stable trade relations between the United States and its European allies. By the end of the 1940s, America had irrevocably entered the business of nation building, creating entangling foreign alliances, and securing its influence throughout the globe.

The war and the following occupations meant that a large group of veterans had been or continued to be stationed abroad. While before the war a trip to Europe was an experience mostly limited to the American elite, the broad shift in American foreign policy brought a much more socioeconomically diverse group of (mostly male) citizens into greater contact with places outside of the American continent than ever before. In the following decades, millions of soldiers and their families would be stationed in Europe and Asia, living abroad for years at a time and bringing their stories home. Because of the demographic diversity of those serving in the armed forces, foreign deployment exponentially expanded the group of Americans with either immediate or indirect experience in a foreign culture.[3]

In addition to the Marshall Plan, other government initiatives encouraged postwar American international influence. Intended as an American answer to the Rhodes Scholarship, The Fulbright Act of 1946 created opportunities for students and scholars from around the world to study in the United States,

and it sent generations of young American scholars abroad. Designation as a "Fulbright Scholar" became a prestige marker for having studied abroad. The Fulbright program spawned a host of study abroad programs in college and universities as well, such that a trip or even semester abroad became a common part of the college experience.

Thus, World War II and its aftermath created a new American ideological perspective that encouraged a high degree of self-assurance. It inserted America into the global narrative more forcefully than before. Moreover, it pushed the formerly hegemonic "Old World" into a perceived position of subservience. This shift in attitude toward the rest of the world did not confine itself to policy makers and cultural elites. The following chapters reveal how Hollywood negotiated the new and complicated relationship between the "New" and the "Old" World in the postwar era. The Americans are portrayed as liberators, conquerors, tourists, capitalists, and colonialists. The Europeans appear as war criminals, victims, children, sexual amusements, or merely attractive but blank slates onto which Americans could project a range of fantasies. These fantasies, however, remain tempered by a continuing perception of Europeans as the arbiters of sophistication, erudition, beauty, and social legitimacy, and therefore as those whose romantic attentions are well worth winning. The films under discussion in this book share a common project of investigating the newly reconfigured relationship between Americans and Europeans, one in which the American characters would, to paraphrase Luce, come to exert upon the world the full impact of their influence, for such purposes as they saw fit.

Genres, Films, and History

As America began imagining itself into the new geopolitical postwar constellation, Hollywood naturally entered the conversation. For specific financial and industrial reasons, which will be examined at length in Chapter One, studios began creating a significant number of films that were both set in Europe and filmed on location. At first, certain established genres emerged as most suitable for "runaway" production. *Quo Vadis* (Mervyn Le Roy, 1951) marked a return of the biblical epic to the Hollywood production list, a genre that would include *The Ten Commandments* (Cecil B. DeMille, 1956), which was filmed in Egypt and Israel. Producers developed a long series of narratives that employed both biblical and classical Greek stories as vehicles for displaying ancient European architecture and scantily clad young actors, such as *Ben-Hur* (William Wyler, 1959) and *Spartacus* (Stanley Kubrick, 1960), both of which were filmed at the Cinecittá studios outside of Rome, which became a sort of home away from home for Hollywood throughout the 1950s.

In the 1960s, Europe returned to the cinema as a theater of war. A cycle of World War II films premiered decades after the conflict that restructured the world. The grandest and most famous was *The Longest Day*, an omnibus account of the D-Day invasion filmed on location with multiple directors, produced by Darryl F. Zanuck, and released in 1962. Later features, such as *The Dirty Dozen* (Robert Aldrich, 1967), *Catch 22* (Mike Nichols, 1970), and the filmic treatments of World War II battles in both the European and Pacific theaters, served to interpret World War II in the face of postwar geopolitical dynamics.

The combination of a much broader and more intensive American contact with the rest of the world and Hollywood studios' experiments with globalization provide ample films of all genres made all over the world. However, Europe remained both the largest market for the export of Hollywood products and the host to the most runaway productions. The following chapters limit their exploration to America's relationship with Europe as it is depicted in those films made by Hollywood producers in Europe. Because we are concentrating on that contemporary relationship, I have chosen to talk about only those films that are also set in postwar Europe. While the biblical epics, war films, colonial adventure films set in Africa and Asia, and the "spaghetti" Westerns filmed in Italy and Yugoslavia would yield interesting readings, the attempt here is to work through both cinematic and noncinematic questions regarding the integration of American and Western European interests in the postwar years. As such, those films that animate such issues will provide the most fruitful place to start.

The Hollywood films set in contemporary Europe in the 1950s are almost invariably stories of Americans finding love in Europe. Whether the story is a comedy or a drama, whether the love interest is another American or a European, the romance is always in part a love affair with Europe itself, presented grandly on the big screen. The uniformity of the portrayal of the contemporary relationship is remarkable. Hollywood in this period portrays America's past with Europe in terms of war and its present in terms of romance. As the Cold War heats up in the 1960s, spy films will add another dimension to Hollywood's romantic framing of the American–European relationship.

The various narrative conventions to which Hollywood films generally resort when weaving romantic tales function, in the films under consideration here, to reveal much about how Americans perceived the changing relationship with their European allies. But the travelogue romances, as we will see, provide interesting variations upon and reconstructions of the generic conventions of the romance. For example, even in films that would generally be read as having happy endings, the romantic pair frequently does not end up together. In fact, with few exceptions, lasting romantic unions are formed only if the lovers are

both American or if, as in the case of love stories involving American GIs, it is clear that the union will be transported back to the States. Holidays in Europe, it is understood, must come to an end, and Americans must eventually return home. The filmic stories of American romances in Europe share enough common traits and were perceived by reviewers at the time as having been related such that we can consider them a genre. Picking up on the language of contemporary reviews, which often noted how well the films captured the location scenery, I will refer to these films as "travelogue romances."

Much serious theoretical work has gone into the question of what a genre is and how we might recognize one when we see one. In his systematic recounting of the large critical literature on genres, in the broader, more literary sense, Steve Neale notes that some theories of genre "stress the primacy of expectations, others the primacy of texts, still others the primacy of categories, corpuses, the norms they encompass, the traditions they embody and the formulae that mark them."[4] Neale attempts to account for genre by considering all of these factors. Thomas Schatz thinks of a genre as an efficient feedback loop. "The filmmaker's inventive impulse is tempered by his or her practical recognition of certain conventions and audience expectations; the audience demands creativity or variation but only within the context of a familiar narrative experience."[5] Schatz later makes a claim for the social function of film genres when he argues that

> we may consider a genre film not only as some filmmaker's artistic expression, but further as the cooperation between artists and audience in celebrating their collective values and ideals. . . . If we are to explain the *why* of Hollywood genres, we must look to their shared social function and to their formal conventions.[6]

Thus, for Neale, Schatz, and many others working on of the topic, film genres and genre films are efficient parts of the culture industry in which producers, distributors, and consumers share a common notion about what films are and how these standardized film industry products should speak to us.

Rick Altman finds this public conformity a bit too constricting. He argues that most genre studies suffer from the common logical error known as a confirmation bias.[7] These studies usually include in a genre category only those films that ineluctably conform to the definition they have set up. That is to say, the genre is defined in a certain way because the scholars have only chosen to include those films in it that conform exactly to the definition they have set up. Any potential counterexamples are excluded from the start. This is only the most damning of many serious flaws Altman finds in the ways that scholars set up their studies of genres.

While Altman's critique of almost every system of understanding film genres is both valid and useful, we might find that the stakes in this theoretical question are a bit lower than his work would suggest. Jeanine Basinger, who has authored a number of fascinating books about stars, stardom, and film genres, makes a rather flippant suggestion as to how one might determine whether or not something is a genre.

> Almost anyone you ask to define a genre such as the Western will come up with a list—the saloon girl with heart of gold, the school teacher, the good guy in the white hat, the bad guy in the black hat, the Indians who try to buy rifles, the sheepherders who try to fence off the cattlemen's grazing land, and the inevitable final shootout. A simple test for any genre is whether or not you can, in fact, generate such a list. If you can, it's a genre. If you can't, it probably isn't.[8]

It might appear at first flush as if Basinger is offering an intuitive rather than an intellectual response to genre theory. But this test provides a useful set of constrictions as well as openings for how we might construct an understanding of a genre. First of all, it avoids the pitfall of presuming that everyone understands a particular film genre or genre filmmaking as a whole in the same way. My list of the characteristics of the Western would differ significantly from those suggested by Basinger. Moreover, it also leaves open the notion that such a list might change over time. That is to say, a Western may look slightly different to different people and different groups, and it may well serve a different function at different times as well.

In discussing film genre, it is useful to remind ourselves that genre categories are not natural kinds but interpretative and explanatory tools applied to an immensely complex set of phenomena. If we wanted the label "genre" or "Western" to do heavy explanatory lifting—say, to mark out precisely what a particular film is, how it is made, and how it is received—then we would likely need an Aristotelian model whereby we determine necessary and sufficient conditions for membership in a genre. As David Bordwell notes, "One could . . . argue that the concept of genre is so historically mutable that no set of necessary and sufficient conditions can mark off genres from other sorts of groupings in ways that all experts or ordinary film-goers would find acceptable."[9] However, if we follow Aristotle's own advice by not asking more precision from a discussion than its subject matter allows,[10] then we can proceed with a much more loosely constructed paradigm model of genres.[11] In a paradigm model, genre categories are defined by paradigmatic sets of characteristics, and particular films fall under those categories based on the number and strength of the similarities they share with those paradigms. Generic

paradigms may shift. They take on certain meanings at certain times, but may change or lose their significance. Filmmakers, distributors, and consumers may be conscious of the patterns in which the films partake, or those patterns may only be recognizable to later audiences. A particular film may resemble more than one paradigm and so may fall into more than one genre. The point of talking about genres, when genres are as loosely formed as this paradigm model suggests, is not to provide a shorthand for industrial explanations or aesthetic interpretations but to focus our attention on a phenomenon that calls out for explanation and interpretation.

Ultimately, in the case of the travelogue romance, it is not important whether we attach the label of genre to the set of films in question. What is important is to notice that Hollywood was, for a particular period of time, inclined to tell a certain kind of story in a certain kind of way. This is not the only sort of film it made, and similar films can be found both before and after this period. But the fact that it is possible to identify a particular narrative and aesthetic form recurring over and over again in a relatively short span of time—especially a form that lends itself so easily to allegorical readings connecting it to the politics of the day—calls for our attention.

So, in the spirit of Basinger's discussions of film genre, and in hopes of opening up rather than limiting a line of inquiry, I would like to characterize the travelogue romance by offering a list of characteristics shared by a large number of films made by Hollywood studios from 1947–1964. I hope that in reading the list, the reader will feel a sense of familiarity. If so, that is some evidence that the pattern I am identifying constitutes a genre. Later chapters will show how the characteristics that form this list provided filmmakers with a reliable model of production and the opportunity to explore a stable set of ideological positions. Those explanations and interpretations will serve as a defense for treating this list of characteristics as defining a genre.

The Credit Sequence

A nondiegetic travelogue alerts the viewer that the film is set in contemporary times in Europe. Frequently the opening titles state that the film was shot, whether in its entirety or in part, on location in the particular city where the story is set.

The Arrival Scene

The main character, usually an American, frequently female, is seen arriving in the European city. (One does not see the character leaving the United States, only her arrival in Europe.)

The Travelogue

The film uses her arrival to offer another travelogue sequence, this time more diegetically bound, as the character makes her way to her lodging or receives an initial tour of the area. The travelogue footage highlights the sorts of monuments and landscapes one would see in a travel guide. There is little attention paid to geographical plausibility in the sequence. Travelogue sequences may recur throughout the film.

The Rationale

The film will need to offer a reason for the American's presence in Europe. She may be in Europe on some sort of business, on a long or a short stay, but tourism and shopping almost always form part of the object. A wish for self-discovery, reinvention, or renewal is usually explicitly mentioned.

Local Rituals

The American partakes in some sort of local ritual, whether touristic or more "authentic," that allows her to mix with the local people or the local setting and highlights the difference from home.

Class Mobility

The American moves freely and sometimes obliviously among the old and fixed European class boundaries, mixing with ancient aristocratic families and street urchins with equal ease.

The Locals

Regardless of socioeconomic class the local population is deferent to the American. The locals are often portrayed as children, regardless of their age. Those who present romantic possibilities for the American speak perfect English (which is usually explained somehow). Those who speak no English or poor English are not potential lovers, but are instead a source of the film's humor.

The Romantic Relationship

A romantic relationship is quickly established between characters from the Old and New Worlds. The Old World resident may be a European or an American exile, but he (or she) will be strongly associated with Europe and represented

as highly sexualized or highly sophisticated. A sexual relationship is strongly implied. Frequently, a love triangle is formed between the main character, the European/Europeanized American and an American love interest (who may remain offscreen).

The Declaration of Difference

The American character realizes, and often says or has said to her, that what is happening now could not have happened at home, that the people she has met are not like those in the States, or that the folks back home would no longer recognize her. This moment may be celebratory or alienating or both in turn.

The Decision

The American is forced to choose to continue the romantic relationship or not, or to choose between lovers. The decision is almost always framed as at least in part a decision between returning home and staying in Europe, or between American values and European values. The main character chooses the path associated with America.

The Transformation

The American has been transformed by the events, almost invariably becoming stronger, wiser, and more independent, whether or not the relationship continues.

The Departure

The film almost always ends with a departure scene or a scene in which departure is decided upon. The tour of the Old World will come to an end, and the American will return home.

Again, this list functions paradigmatically rather than categorically. We should understand the elements as a mean. No film has all of these features, and most films deviate from the descriptions somewhat. But, in keeping with Basinger's test for genre, in the case of the travelogue romance, it is rather easy to generate a list of characteristic features.

Overview

In the following chapters, I will trace the development of the travelogue romance by examining sets of films that speak to many of the ideological and

industrial questions of the day. Each of the following chapters shall be organized around an issue with which certain productions and films were confronted. We shall often separate productions from films because in most cases the studio or the producers were trying to respond to trends or sets of challenges that differ from the ideological content of the films' narratives. At times the production concerns and those of the story itself appear to converge. At other times, the connections are much more tenuous. Thus, it is important to be attentive to production history and narrative content as well as the cultural, economic, and political forces that influence both.

Chapter One will introduce the industrial conditions of postwar Hollywood. It will show how a long list of factors combined to undermine the strength of the studios immediately after World War II. By the early 1950s, the classical Hollywood modes of production, distribution, and exhibition were each undergoing rapid transformation. Among the changes in production practices was the advent of what came to be known as the "runaway production," that is, the removal of much of the shooting of a film to a location other than southern California. We will see how and why European cities became increasingly attractive to film producers. This move to Europe, in turn, led to the development of a wider variety of stories set in the Old World.

Chapter Two is dedicated to a discussion of the film that most successfully piqued Hollywood's and the general public's interest in the new romantic possibilities of the Old World, namely William Wyler's *Roman Holiday*. While not the first runaway film with a contemporary setting, *Roman Holiday* provided a production and narrative model off of which many other films would build. In the production history of the film we find evidence that Paramount was quite self-consciously experimenting with both runaway production and the combination of the travelogue with the romance in order to deal with the industrial crises of the day. An interpretation of the narrative content of the film itself provides both our first look at a travelogue romance and an allegorical presentation of Hollywood's act of running away.

In Chapter Three, we will examine the construction of Europe as a narrative locale for sexual awakening, discovery, and reinvention. We will examine how and why so many European runaway productions employ the trope of the European holiday as sexual adventure. Through a discussion of four films, *September Affair* (William Dieterle, 1950), *Indiscretion of an American Wife* (Vittorio DeSica, 1954), *Summertime* (David Lean, 1955), and *Interlude* (Douglas Sirk, 1957), I will discuss why Europe functions so frequently as the woods in a Grimm's fairy tale, that is, the place one must traverse in order to enter sexuality. Moreover, in each of the films discussed in this chapter, the relationship is hampered by the fact that one of the characters is married. This plot device ensures that the relationship will

remain temporary, and the American will return to her or his productive life stateside.

One of the Hollywood studios' most dramatic attempts to draw audiences back into the theaters in the early 1950s came from the introduction of various wide-screen processes designed to enhance cinematic experience. Chapter Four discusses the marketing strategy of using new technologies to exploit the increased interest in foreign travel and in fashion. The chapter uses three films, *Three Coins in the Fountain* (Jean Negulesco, 1954), *To Catch a Thief* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1955), and *Funny Face* (Stanley Donen, 1957), to reveal a set of production strategies designed to combat plummeting movie attendance. This chapter will show how the convergence of wide-screen technology and runaway production affected the growing series of films about the transatlantic relationship. It will also argue that the production choices carried with them ideological remnants that influence how we are to read the films' narratives.

Chapter Five will trace the evolution of the German–American romance as depicted in the travelogue romances from the end of the Second World War to the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. The discussion begins and ends with films directed by Billy Wilder in Berlin. *A Foreign Affair* (1948) depicts the newly conquered Berlin as a den of iniquity in which American morality must prevail over the remnants of National Socialist ideology. While tours of duty can hardly be equated with the other kinds of tours portrayed in travelogue romances, many of the structural and thematic elements parallel the rest of the genre. Gradually economic occupation overtakes military occupation as the metaphor for German–American relations. When Wilder returns to Berlin in 1961 for *One, Two, Three*, Cold War tensions have superseded World War II resentments. Berlin, now a much more charming den of iniquity, is the last bastion of Western freedom against the tyranny of Soviet rule. The occupation troops have been replaced by the soldiers of capitalism, in the form of Coca-Cola executives. Between Wilder's two Berlin films we find a set of films, including *I Was a Male War Bride* (Howard Hawks, 1949), *The Big Lift* (George Seaton, 1950), *Fräulein* (Henry Koster, 1958), and *GI Blues* (Norman Taurog, 1960), in which the discourse of distrust and occupation gradually gives way to a narrative of empathy and integration. The travelogue romance negotiates the ideological transformation in American popular sentiment toward Germany as a symptom of moral decay to an example of successful rehabilitation.

Chapter Six discusses the decline of the travelogue romance. The chapter offers evidence that filmmakers and moviegoers alike began to tire of the basic conceits of the travelogue romance by the early 1960s. Films such as *Town Without Pity* (Gottfried Reinhardt, 1961), *The Roman Spring of Mrs.*

Stone (José Quintero, 1961), and *Two Weeks in Another Town* (Vincente Minnelli, 1962) suggest both a darker underside to the kinds of stories that make up the travelogue romance and a receding fascination with Old World splendors. Moreover, the films depict the American–European encounter as something other than appealing. Meanwhile *Paris, When it Sizzles* (Richard Quine, 1964) aggressively lampoons what had become Hollywood's trite uses of Europe. While the travelogue romance film did not disappear, by the mid-1960s other cultural movements were afoot that would overrun the stories of American sexual awakening in the Old World. The social upheaval at home in the 1960s as well as the shift of international attention to Southeast Asia made the self-discovery involved in a trip to Europe seem slightly less relevant than it had a decade earlier. America had to return from its European holiday and get its own house in order.